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Testimony to: Senator Jonathan Harris, Representative Betsy Ritter and  
The Public Health Committee members

In Support of: Raised Bill 5630

It is with the greatest confidence that I completely endorse the creation of the Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner and completely support HB 5630. As a clinical instructor at the Forsyth Project from 1972 through June of 1974, I taught all phases of restorative dentistry to the dental hygienists selected to be in this research grant. The purpose of this research grant was to determine if the dental hygienist, with their extensive training, knowledge and background in working within the oral cavity, could be taught to perform all phases of restorative dentistry equal to that of an experienced practicing dentist. After 25 weeks or 746 hours of training the dental hygienists began doing all phases of the irreversible/surgical procedures of restorative dentistry.

To validate and remove any questions of staff bias of our opinion of the quality of the restorative dentistry done by the dental hygienists a Special Liaison Committee of practicing dentists represented the Massachusetts Dental Society and became Evaluators of the restorative dentistry. Also participating in this blind study would practicing dentists from the local area and staff doctors. With this method the Evaluators didn't know if they were evaluating the restorative dentistry of the dental hygienist, staff doctors or the practicing doctors. The results of the first two Blind Evaluations were that the restorative dentistry done by the dental

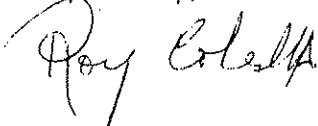
hygienists was equal to and in some procedures superior to that of the experienced practicing dentists.

In the final Blind Evaluation two professors of restorative dentistry from each of the dental schools in the Boston area, Boston University, Tufts and Harvard were the evaluators of this blind study. The results were the same, the dental hygienists restorative procedures were equal in quality to that of the experienced practicing dentists.

With the crisis throughout the United States of America today as reflected in the Surgeon General's Report of 2000 when it was determined that the number one chronic medical disease in children from the ages of 5 -17 is dental caries. That together with the inability of the indigent, disadvantaged, and minority Americans who live constantly with dental diseases without the means of receiving quality dental care mandates that the creation of the Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner be immediate. In Connecticut over 50% of the children do not visit a dental office on a prescribed regular basis and the disadvantaged and minorities minimally, if at all, receive any dental care.

As the Forsyth Project proved beyond any doubt, the dental hygienist can be trained in 25 weeks to provide quality restorative dentistry equal to that of an experienced practicing dentist. As such, it is with the strongest possible recommendation that I urge all legislators, public health officials and members of all organized dental groups to unanimously support the creation of the Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner in Connecticut.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Roy Colella". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Roy" being more prominent than the last name "Colella".

Roy Colella D.D.S.